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# Provost Goodwin on Education

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## PROVOST GOODWIN ON EDUCATION

Through the kindness of Mr. George E. Nitzsche we have recently received an uncompleted manuscript of Daniel R. Goodwin, Provost of the University from 1860 to 1868, entitled "Education: the System of Education adopted in the University of Pennsylvania defended. An Address before the Associated Alumni, delivered Friday evening, Nov. 23, 1860." The manuscript comes to an abrupt end, but we print it here as an item of interest in the history of the University:

Mr. President and Gentlemen,  
Alumni of the Univ. of Penn.

It is about a week since that your Committee extended to me an urgent invitation to make an informal Address before you this evening, in addition to the regular Oration to be delivered by my Reverend brother from New York. At first I felt compelled to decline the undertaking upon so brief a notice. But on further reflection I was unwilling to seem to slight an Invitation proceeding from such a Source, or to miss an opportunity, however suddenly presented, of forming an acquaintance and opening a communication of thought and sympathy with the Alumni of the University. I have therefore consented to appear before you this evening; but I come, after all, in such a physical condition that a prudent regard for my health as well as my reputation would have required me to stay at home. I must therefore ask your generous indulgence.

Gentlemen, I rejoice in this opportunity of presenting to the Sons and friends of this University my cordial Salutations. I rejoice to feel that I am part and parcel with yourselves in this noble Institution. I rejoice in the ties of scholarly sympathy and a common culture. I rejoice in the Catholicity of the fellowship of learning and Science. Other ties there are stronger than these in their power of attraction, but they serve also as the conductors of a still stronger repellent influence. The tie of patriotism and common citizenship is

strong; but patriotism degenerates into party-spirit, and is desecrated by the brawls and rancour and selfishness of the political arena. Men come to love their common country less than they hate their party's opponents. The tie of religion is strong. Christianity would teach us to recognize as a brother and take lovingly to our hearts every one who bears the image of Christ, every one who loves our common Lord; but, alas, Christians are divided into schools and parties and sects; and so violently are they opposed to each other that the *odium theologicum* has become a by-word, and I fear that practically their mutual antipathies and animosities are felt to be stronger than the bonds of their common Christianity. Every interest, therefore, however slight, every tie, however slender—though it be but as the thread of the spider's web—that may tend to draw these discordant elements together in harmonious action on common ground is to be hailed with delight, to be embraced, improved, strengthened. Whatever will give us a fuller, a more genial, consciousness of our common humanity will neither weaken our sense of common citizenship nor adulterate the truly Christian Spirit of our religion. The cities of Greece—Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Argos, Thebes—had their separate governments, their conflicting interests, their ships, their armies, their colonies, their conquests, their plans of aggrandizement and claims of pre-eminence; and yet the Olympic games—mere games though they were—preserved a sense of common Grecian nationality, amidst all their mutual conflicts and political jealousies and animosities; at least they probably contributed more to preserve it than any other fact or institution whatever.

Our common interest in the University of Pennsylvania is the chord which I would strike this evening. We have reason to take a generous pride in the largeness of views which characterizes our University in her idea and plan of culture—in her schools of Medicine, Law and Mines on the one side, and her Charity foundations on the other, added to the training of her Academical Department. Her origin, his-

tory, and great names have no partizan odour. Franklin and Rittenhouse, Mifflin and M'Kean, White and Ingersoll, Smith and Ewing, Rush and Wistar are identified with the reputation and culture of this city and State, of our whole country, of our common religion and our common humanity; but they can be appropriated by no clique or party. Our University welcomes Science, she cherishes Classical learning, she reverences religion;—but she has no “hobbies.”

Precisely on this ground it is that the University has to meet with opposition and objections.

It is objected that she gives too much space and prominence to the Sciences. I answer that the character of our present civilization, whether it be good or bad, is such that the study of the Sciences is absolutely indispensable to a truly liberal education. I hope that arrangements may be made for enlargement rather than retrenchment in this direction.

On the other hand, it is objected that too much time and attention are devoted to the Classics. I answer that they are essential to the Department of Arts. You cannot have a College without Classical Studies. A College is a College, whether it be a desirable thing or not; and the degrees of Bachelor and Master of Arts, whether worth anything or not, have a definite meaning. I would rather see the attention to Classical Studies increased than diminished in our curriculum. If they were abolished or much restricted in the University, one of two things would happen,—either the city would be compelled to establish for its accommodation a proper College independent of the University, or its sons would, in still greater numbers, be sent abroad for a Collegiate education. It is a great mistake to suppose that Classical Studies are unpractical. On the contrary their true design and proper effect are eminently practical. The classics are to be studied as improving models, and not as store houses of learned and pedantic quotations. If the latter were their object a Dictionary of quotations would be more directly to the purpose than all the Classical authors together.



That speaker or writer shows, in my opinion, most of the truly classical character, form, and spirit, who, disdaining all tawdry and needless ornament of whatever kind, goes most directly and effectively to his point. Such a man brews no ragouts from the fragments of other men's dinners, gathers no nosegays of dead and faded flowers; but presents to us the living tree, blooming it may be in its season—and then the more beautiful—but blooming only that it may bear fruit. No speaker or writer was ever more simple and straightforward, more studiously plain, pointed, practical and business-like, than Demosthenes. And yet he is, by common consent, the greatest orator of antiquity; and precisely for this reason was he the greatest. Cicero excelled him in copiousness of words and pomp of diction and what is too commonly but abusively called *eloquence*; and precisely for this reason is rightly reckoned his inferior. Yet even Cicero scarcely quotes a line of Greek in all his business orations.

But the grand objection alleged against the System of our University is—"the want of religion."

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It is unfortunate that the remaining part of Dr. Goodwin's address is not available, for it undoubtedly constituted the more important part of his remarks. The following account of the address and of the meeting at which it was delivered is taken from the *Public Ledger* of November 24, 1860:

The anniversary meeting of the Alumni of the University of Pennsylvania was held last evening in the College building. After music by the orchestra, Dr. Goodwin, Provost of the University, was introduced, and addressed the audience, mainly in reply to a criticism upon certain remarks made by himself on the occasion of his inauguration to the Provostship, which appeared in a religious journal some time since.

The paper in question took exception to the system of instruction as at present practiced in the University, and more particularly to a fanciful allusion to Heenan and Sayers, made by the Provost at the time alluded to. He said that his statement had been somewhat perverted, but what he had asserted relative to the subject of physical development properly attained, he was prepared to prove the truth of,

and maintain. He further demonstrated the desirableness of physical strength and beauty, and believed that the improvement and beautifying of any one member of the human body lent additional vigor and beauty to the whole. Various incidents were narrated by the speaker, contrasting the characters and standing in society of students who had received collegiate educations apart from religious training and those who had been religiously instructed; and while the former could not be said to be more evil disposed than the generality of young men, among the latter had too often been found lamentable evidences of a want of Christian spirit and a decided proneness to sin.

On the conclusion of his address, Dr. Goodwin was loudly applauded. The Rev. H. E. Montgomery, of New York, then delivered the annual oration, taking for his subject, the importance and value of religion in every vocation of life.

It thus appears that religion was the predominant topic of the anniversary meeting of the Alumni in 1860, and that Dr. Goodwin's address followed closely the general lines of his inaugural address, delivered on September 10 of that year, a copy of which is preserved in the Library.